

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 RABAT 01117 021329Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03  
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13  
ACDA-07 MCT-01 OMB-01 /078 W  
-----030722 112148 /14

R 021130Z MAR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY RABAT  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1138  
INFO AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 1117

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1  
TAGS: PFOR LY US  
SUBJECT: US-LIBYAN RELATIONS

REF RABAT 5494

1. LIBYAN AMBASSADOR SUWAYSI, A WELL-MEANING SOUL WHO HAS LONG BEEN FOND OF THE UNITED STATES, SOUGHT ME OUT ON FEBRUARY 28 TO REPORT THAT HE MET WITH QADHAFI IN MID-OCTOBER AS SCHEDULED, THAT HE PASSED ON MY COMMENTS ON US-LIBYAN RELATIONS BASED ON DEPARTMENT'S GUIDANCE (RABAT 5435 AND STATE 249956), AND THAT WHEN HE SAW QADHAFI AGAIN IN MID-DECEMBER, THE LATTER ASKED HIM TO PASS ON A NUMBER OF COMMENTS TO ME FOR RELAY TO WASHINGTON.

2. ACCORDING TO SUWAYSI, QADHAFI WISHED TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES AND HOPED THAT THE ADVENT OF THE NEW ADMINISTRATION WOULD AUGUR WELL FOR SUCH A MOVE. BASED ON STATEMENTS BY PRESIDENT CARTER AND SECRETARY VANCE LOOKING TOWARDS BETTER RELATIONS WITH A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES, QADHAFI LOOKED TO A FRESH START WITH THE US WHERE BOTH SIDES MIGHT AGREE TO LET BYGONES BE BYGONES. HE CONSIDERED THAT THE RELEASE OF THE C-130S FOR WHICH LIBYA HAD LONG AGO PAID WOULD BE A PROPITIOUS MOVE TOWARDS IMPROVING RELATIONS. ON  
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INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM, HE POINTED TO LIBYA'S REFUSAL ON TWO OCCASIONS TO PERMIT HIJACKERS TO LAND IN LIBYA AS AN INDICATION THAT HE REJECTS TERRORISM. QADHAFI DID NOT INDICATE ANY DISPOSITION TO MODIFY HIS POSITION ON THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE MOVES, BUT SUWAYSI STRESSED THAT IF EVERYONE ELSE INCLUDING THE PALESTINIANS AGREED ON A PEACE FORMULA, THEN LIBYAN OPINION BECOMES IRRELEVANT.

WHAT WAS IMPORTANT WAS TO STRENGTHEN BILATERAL RELATIONS TO THE MUTUAL BENEFIT OF BOTH SIDES.

3. PORTRAYING QADHAFI AS WILLING TO ACCEPT FACTS WHEN HIS IMPETUOSITY GETS HIM INTO TROUBLE, SUWAYSI SAID QADHAFI, FOR EXAMBLE, BEGAN TO DISTANCE HIMSELF FROM THE POLISARIO FOLLOWING EXTENSIVE BRIEFINGS ON THE MOROCCAN POSITION ON THE SAHARA. IN THIS CONNECTION, HE NOTED THAT LIBYAN BROADCASTS TO THE POLISARIO ENDED A MONTH OR TWO AGO, AND HE THOUGHT THAT IN TIME QADHAFI'S SUPPORT FOR EFFORTS AGAINST MOROCCO IN THE SAHARA WOULD CEASE.

4. SPEAKING STRICTLY PERSONALLY, SUWAYSI SUGGESTED THAT A REASONABLY HIGH-LEVEL DELEGATION BE SENT FROM THE US TO LIBYA OR VICE-VERSA TO OPEN A DIALOGUE LOOKING TOWARDS AN IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS.

5. ALTHOUGH I UNDERTOOK TO REPORT HIS COMMENTS, I DID NOT OFFER SUWAYSI ANY ENCOURAGEMENT, NOTING THAT EACH COUNTRY HAD REPRESENTATION IN THE OTHER'S CAPITAL AVAILABLE FOR DISCUSSIONS. AFTER REVIEWING THE PRIORITY IMPORTANCE THE NEW ADMINISTRATION ATTACHES TO MOVEMENT TOWARDS PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST IN 1977, I WAS CONFIDENT, I TOLD SUWAYSI, THAT CONTRARY TO WHAT HE MIGHT THINK, IMPROVEMENT IN OUR RELATIONS WILL DEPEND HEAVILY ON THERE OEING A BASIS FOR COOPERATION TO THAT END.

6. COMMENT: HIS ONLY EXPLANATION FOR THE DELAY OF TWO AND A HALF MONTHS IN REPORTING QADHAFI'S COMMENTS  
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WAS A VAGUE REFERENCE TO MANY TRIPS OUTSIDE MOROCCO. THIS TIMING OF HIS APPROACH MAY, OF COURSE, BE PART OF WHAT WE UNDERSTAND IS LIBYA'S CURRENT EFFORT TO UNSTICK ITS RELATIONS WITH US. PLEASE ADVISE.  
ANDERSON

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## Message Attributes

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